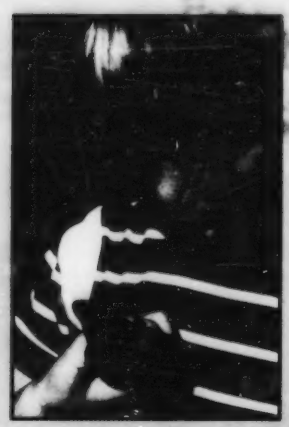
PARKS CANADA AGENCY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2001–2004

Sustaining Ecological and Commemorative Integrity



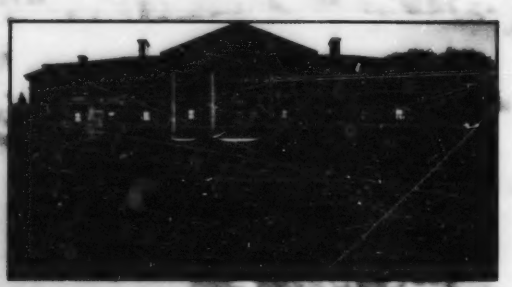


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Minister of Canadian Heritage 3

Introduction 5

Sustainable Development at Parks Canada 5

Parks Canada's Goals and Objectives 6

Goal 1 Establish Systems of Representative Examples of Canada's Natural and Cultural Heritage 7

Goal 2 Protect Ecological and Commemorative Integrity 10

Goal 3 Ensure that Commemorative and Ecological Integrity Values Are Understood and Supported by Parks Canada's Stakeholders and the Public 12

Goal 4 Improve Environmental Stewardship in Managing Our Operations 13

Measuring Our Performance 16

Annex 1: Parks Canada in Profile 17

Annex 2: Review of the 1997 Sustainable Development Strategy 19

Annex 3: Consultations 20

Annex 4: Issue Scan 21

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, (2000)
ISBN: R62-338/2001
Cat: 0-662-65498-6

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

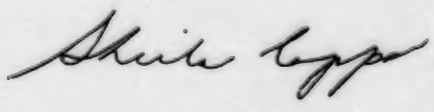
Canada's national parks, national historic sites and canals, and national marine conservation areas belong to all Canadians. They are powerful symbols of our identity, representing the power of Canada's natural environment and the vitality of its culture. They are there for present and future generations of Canadians to appreciate, understand and experience. Ensuring this legacy means integrating the environmental, economic and social pillars that are at the heart of sustainable development into all our decision-making.

Parks Canada, the steward of these natural and cultural resources, is charged with protecting and ensuring the ecological integrity of national parks, the sustainable use of national marine conservation areas, and the commemorative integrity of national historic sites. Stewardship of these special places also means that they will be accessible and provide opportunities for positive experiences that satisfy expectations of citizens, strengthen their sense of Canadian identity and support responsible, sustainable use.

Parks Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy sets out clear, achievable goals and targets for contributing to the long-term integrity and sustainability of our natural and cultural heritage. Parks Canada alone cannot protect these special places. Partnerships with visitors, community residents, industry, stakeholders and Aboriginal peoples are necessary to manage ecosystems, identify and conserve heritage, and create sustainable tourism and public support for the values of protection and sustainability.

Over the next three years, we will work with our partners and stakeholders to expand the systems of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas. Together, we will improve the ecological and commemorative integrity and sustainability of these resources while fostering appropriate use and sustainable tourism. By building support for our ecological and commemorative objectives, all Canadians will be provided with an opportunity to better appreciate and respect the significance and fragility of these precious historic resources and park ecosystems.

Ultimately, it is up to all of us to make sure our land, our waters, and our past will always have a future.



101-06176/

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is:

> *"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".*[1]

Sustainable development emphasizes the need for equity and fairness, and for ensuring the rights of future generations to an equivalent or better quality of life as today. It is based upon taking a long term view of today's actions, an acceptance of the precautionary principle and a commitment to understanding the interconnections between environment, economy and society. A sustainable development approach highlights the interplay between the local and the global. It recognizes the need for cooperation within and between sectors.

Parks Canada's mandate is essentially a sustainable development one:

> *To protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.*

The business of Parks Canada is the protection and presentation of representative examples of Canada's biodiversity and significant examples of Canada's history and culture. In doing this Parks Canada make an important contribution to the Government's commitment to sustainable development.

This is the first Sustainable Development Strategy for Parks Canada since its establishment as an Agency in December 1998. Prior to that, Parks Canada was part of the 1997 Sustainable Development Strategy of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The development of this first stand alone Sustainable Development Strategy provided an opportunity to review the approach and achievements developed in 1997. This new Strategy is based on a review of our existing commitments and strategic directions, ongoing consultations with stakeholders and staff, and a scan of key external factors affecting Parks Canada. It highlights the opportunities that Parks Canada intends to pursue over the coming three years and identifies ways to monitor and report on progress.

Sustainable Development at Parks Canada

Parks Canada is principally responsible for managing three national systems each with a unique significance to Canada's environment and culture.[2] National parks, along with national marine conservation areas, are established to represent clearly identified land and marine regions. National historic sites, which include national historic canals, are designated to commemorate significant aspects of Canada's past.

---

1 World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Our Common Future. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987 p. 43.

2 Parks Canada also directs or coordinates delivery in additional programs that conserve aspects of Canada's heritage including the Federal Heritage Buildings Program, the Heritage Railway Stations Program, the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Program, the Federal Archaeology Program, and the National Program for Grave Sites of Canadian Prime Ministers.

For national parks to protect Canada's wild places, their ecological integrity must be maintained, meaning that the structure and function of the national park ecosystems, with their various species and natural processes, are likely to persist unimpaired by human activity. For national marine conservation areas to protect marine environments, conservation objectives must continue to be harmonized with ecologically sustainable use. Since the mid-1990's, Parks Canada has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to protecting national parks and marine conservation areas. Ecosystem-based management is a holistic approach that involves working with others to achieve common goals. Multi-disciplinary in nature, it seeks to integrate biological, physical, and social information with the goal of creating environmentally, socially and economically healthy parks within broader regional landscapes.

For national historic sites to continue preserving Canada's cultural legacy, their commemorative integrity must be ensured. This means that the site must be healthy and whole and not under direct threat, its national significance is communicated, and it must be managed in a way that will maintain this state. Management of cultural resources is also multi-disciplinary and requires the integration of social, environmental and economic factors to ensure commemorative integrity.

The ideals of ecological and commemorative integrity and sustainable use are only achievable through engaging the public and other stakeholders. With the help of its many partners, Parks Canada offers both visitors and non-visitors opportunities to understand, appreciate and enjoy Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas. By providing heritage learning experiences, on and off site, Parks Canada motivates visitors to respect the integrity of these places, for the immediate and long-term benefit of Canadians, and for the immediate and long-term integrity of the heritage places in our care. In the case of some 650 national historic sites not administered directly, Parks Canada fosters sustainable development by encouraging owners to conserve the values for which these places were designated.

Finally, as a leader in the stewardship on natural and cultural resources, Parks Canada has a special responsibility in the management of its own assets and operations. Parks Canada is one of the biggest custodial organizations in the federal government and can make a significant contribution to the goal of greening the government's operations. In addition, Parks Canada directly manages six park communities which can become models of sustainable communities in action.

Parks Canada's Goals and Objectives

Parks Canada's contribution to the sustainable development agenda is summarized in the following four goals:

- Establish Systems of Representative Examples of Canada's Natural and Cultural Heritage
- Protect Ecological and Commemorative Integrity
- Ensure that Commemorative and Ecological Integrity Values Are Understood and Supported by Parks Canada's Stakeholders and the Public
- Improve our Environmental Stewardship in Managing Our Operations.

Areas for Horizontal Planning for Sustainable Development Across Government	*Parks Canada Involvement*
• Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North	✔
• Sustainable Development in Government Operations	✔
• Productivity Through Eco-efficiency	
• Promoting Sustainability in Communities	✔
• Sustainable Development Indicators and Reporting/Knowledge and Information	✔
• International Aspects of Sustainable Development	
• Sustainable Development and Health	
• Social Aspects of Sustainable Development	✔

In pursuing these goals, Parks Canada also contributes to the government's larger sustainable development agenda. In the last year, considerable attention has been devoted to defining and clarifying government-wide areas for coordinated action on key sustainable development issues. Eight areas for coordination and horizontal planning across government were identified by an interdepartmental sustainable development network. The connection between Parks Canada's specific goals, objectives and actions with the government's horizontal planning and action agenda is highlighted in boxes throughout the Strategy.

In some cases Parks Canada's ability to carry out particular actions and meet certain of the targets set out in this document are limited by financial pressures facing the organization. Parks Canada continues to pursue funding strategies to address these issues. Where our capacity to realize particular activities or to deliver on specific targets is constrained by funding, appropriate notes have been made as they are presented in this strategy.

Goal 1 Establish Systems of Representative Examples of Canada's Natural and Cultural Heritage

The case for saving and protecting terrestrial and marine plants, animal species and their ecosystems as "an indispensable prerequisite for sustainable development"[3] is well established. In addition to being valuable in their own right, preservation of unique and representative areas and species maintains biological options and the flexibility for the future to respond to unforseen and changing environmental conditions as well as social and economic demands. National parks and other protected areas, particularly when viewed in a larger ecosystem context, are key means of ensuring this protection.

Parks Canada's efforts at protecting terrestrial ecosystems are guided by the *National Parks System Plan*. The Plan divides Canada into 39 distinct natural regions based on geology, physiography and vegetation, and guides efforts to establish new national parks. The goal of the National Parks System

[3] World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Our Common Future. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987 p. 166.

Areas for Horizontal Planning for Sustainable Development Across Government	*Parks Canada Involvement*
• Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North	✔
• Sustainable Development in Government Operations	✔
• Productivity Through Eco-efficiency	
• Promoting Sustainability in Communities	✔
• Sustainable Development Indicators and Reporting/Knowledge and Information	✔
• International Aspects of Sustainable Development	
• Sustainable Development and Health	
• Social Aspects of Sustainable Development	✔

In pursuing these goals, Parks Canada also contributes to the government's larger sustainable development agenda. In the last year, considerable attention has been devoted to defining and clarifying government-wide areas for coordinated action on key sustainable development issues. Eight areas for coordination and horizontal planning across government were identified by an interdepartmental sustainable development network. The connection between Parks Canada's specific goals, objectives and actions with the government's horizontal planning and action agenda is highlighted in boxes throughout the Strategy.

In some cases Parks Canada's ability to carry out particular actions and meet certain of the targets set out in this document are limited by financial pressures facing the organization. Parks Canada continues to pursue funding strategies to address these issues. Where our capacity to realize particular activities or to deliver on specific targets is constrained by funding, appropriate notes have been made as they are presented in this strategy.

Goal 1 Establish Systems of Representative Examples of Canada's Natural and Cultural Heritage

The case for saving and protecting terrestrial and marine plants, animal species and their ecosystems as "an indispensable prerequisite for sustainable development"[3] is well established. In addition to being valuable in their own right, preservation of unique and representative areas and species maintains biological options and the flexibility for the future to respond to unforseen and changing environmental conditions as well as social and economic demands. National parks and other protected areas, particularly when viewed in a larger ecosystem context, are key means of ensuring this protection.

Parks Canada's efforts at protecting terrestrial ecosystems are guided by the *National Parks System Plan*. The Plan divides Canada into 39 distinct natural regions based on geology, physiography and vegetation, and guides efforts to establish new national parks. The goal of the National Parks System

[3] World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Our Common Future. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987 p. 166.

Plan is to represent all 39 natural regions with a national park. Twenty five of the regions are now represented by one or more of the 39 national parks and national park reserves. These parks and reserves cover 244 540 square kilometers of territory representing 2.6 percent of Canada's total land mass.

A system plan, similar to the one for national parks, guides the establishment of national marine conservation areas. Entitled *Sea to Sea to Sea* (1995), the Plan divides Canada's oceanic waters and Great Lakes into 29 natural marine regions. Currently, three marine regions are represented and an existing federal-provincial agreement will result in the representation of another two.

The establishment of national parks and marine conservation areas is inherently an exercise in sustainable development decision-making involving complex consideration and balancing of a host of environmental, economic and social factors. The first steps in the process include identifying representative areas and selection of possible sites based on the best available environmental and natural science. This is followed by intensive feasibility assessment and negotiations for establishment of these places. Included in this process is extensive public consultation involving a host of considerations related to traditional use patterns, alternative future land uses and governance and resource management options such as consideration of comprehensive land claims by Aboriginal people. Over the next three years, Parks Canada is committed to following this process to advance the agenda of new national park and marine conservation areas establishment. However, to achieve the targets outlined below, Parks Canada requires access to additional funding.

Objective 1.1 Creation of New National Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas in Unrepresented Regions

ACTIVITY	TARGETS
• Conduct feasibility studies, negotiate park and national marine conservation area agreements, and acquire/assemble lands. (Subject to obtaining new funding)	• Establish three new national parks in unrepresented regions over the next three years • establish two new national marine conservation areas over the next three years • Complete feasibility studies for another four national parks and two national marine conservation areas over the next three years

The case for protection and conservation of national historic sites and sustaining awareness and appreciation for people and events of national historic significance is no less compelling. National historic sites and other cultural heritage places promote an ethic of reuse, and protection of valued resources that is essential for the integration of sustainable development into the fabric of Canadian life. They can encourage viable and continuing use of the nation's built and *in-situ* cultural heritage and play an important role, along with national parks and marine conservation areas, in the development of a sustainable tourism industry.

Since the 1970's over 20 percent of Canada's historic places have been lost. Historic places continue to face increased threats as significant changes in the economy may lead to the abandonment or marginalization of commercial, industrial, religious, residential and public infrastructure that has important heritage value. This will increase pressure on heritage organizations such as Parks Canada to help owners find new ways to use and protect these properties.

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Social and Cultural Aspects of Sustainable Development

The establishment and protection of national parks and marine conservation areas are primarily directed at the environmental pillar in sustainable development (SD) although it also has implications for the economic and social dimensions of SD as well. For example, national parks have been established with the agreement that local communities could continue traditional land use practices within a park (i.e., hunting or logging). As well, innovative park governance arrangements with Aboriginal communities have been developed which contribute to maintaining and strengthening the social fabric of communities in and around parks.

Although the protection of biodiversity in national parks produces secondary social and economic benefits for communities and people around national parks, these are not the primary focus of this activity. In contrast, Parks Canada's work in protecting and preserving significant examples of Canada's history and culture is directly related to the social and cultural side of sustainable development. The importance of the cultural dimension of sustainable development is aptly summed up by Gro Brundtland, former chair of the World Commission on the Environment and Development.

If we are to succeed, we must be aware of the historical and social context of our lives, and build our futures on this understanding. Culture is the framework in which human beings develop, and our cultural heritage contributes to our comprehension of context, continuity and identity. This is why we have a particular responsibility for preserving our cultural monuments.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1994
***In "Four Norwegian Cultural Treasures"* a pamphlet on Norwegian cultural treasures published by Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO.**

Parks Canada's work in this area is guided by the *National Historic Sites of Canada System Plan*. This Plan sets out a thematic framework, reports on progress to date and notes less-well represented aspects of Canada's history. Most importantly, it sets out three strategic priorities for commemoration: the history of Aboriginal people, ethno-cultural communities and women's history. Over the next three years, Parks Canada will work to increase the number of designations, particularly in unrepresented areas as well as directly assisting in the establishment and protection of new national historic sites.

Objective 1.2 Designation and Commemoration of New National Historic Sites, Persons and Events of National Historic Significance

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Consult and provide research support to identify and designate national historic sites • Assist in the establishment and protection of specific national historical sites (subject to obtaining new funding)	• Designate, over five years, 135 new sites, persons and events, 55 of which will commemorate Aboriginal, women's and ethno-cultural communities' history • Develop 10 new cost-sharing agreements over the next three years

Plan is to represent all 39 natural regions with a national park. Twenty five of the regions are now represented by one or more of the 39 national parks and national park reserves. These parks and reserves cover 244 540 square kilometers of territory representing 2.6 percent of Canada's total land mass.

A system plan, similar to the one for national parks, guides the establishment of national marine conservation areas. Entitled *Sea to Sea to Sea* (1995), the Plan divides Canada's oceanic waters and Great Lakes into 29 natural marine regions. Currently, three marine regions are represented and an existing federal-provincial agreement will result in the representation of another two.

The establishment of national parks and marine conservation areas is inherently an exercise in sustainable development decision-making involving complex consideration and balancing of a host of environmental, economic and social factors. The first steps in the process include identifying representative areas and selection of possible sites based on the best available environmental and natural science. This is followed by intensive feasibility assessment and negotiations for establishment of these places. Included in this process is extensive public consultation involving a host of considerations related to traditional use patterns, alternative future land uses and governance and resource management options such as consideration of comprehensive land claims by Aboriginal people. Over the next three years, Parks Canada is committed to following this process to advance the agenda of new national park and marine conservation areas establishment. However, to achieve the targets outlined below, Parks Canada requires access to additional funding.

Objective 1.1 Creation of New National Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas in Unrepresented Regions

ACTIVITY	TARGETS
• Conduct feasibility studies, negotiate park and national marine conservation area agreements, and acquire/assemble lands. (Subject to obtaining new funding)	• Establish three new national parks in unrepresented regions over the next three years • establish two new national marine conservation areas over the next three years • Complete feasibility studies for another four national parks and two national marine conservation areas over the next three years

The case for protection and conservation of national historic sites and sustaining awareness and appreciation for people and events of national historic significance is no less compelling. National historic sites and other cultural heritage places promote an ethic of reuse, and protection of valued resources that is essential for the integration of sustainable development into the fabric of Canadian life. They can encourage viable and continuing use of the nation's built and *in-situ* cultural heritage and play an important role, along with national parks and marine conservation areas, in the development of a sustainable tourism industry.

Since the 1970's over 20 percent of Canada's historic places have been lost. Historic places continue to face increased threats as significant changes in the economy may lead to the abandonment or marginalization of commercial, industrial, religious, residential and public infrastructure that has important heritage value. This will increase pressure on heritage organizations such as Parks Canada to help owners find new ways to use and protect these properties.

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Social and Cultural Aspects of Sustainable Development

The establishment and protection of national parks and marine conservation areas are primarily directed at the environmental pillar in sustainable development (SD) although it also has implications for the economic and social dimensions of SD as well. For example, national parks have been established with the agreement that local communities could continue traditional land use practices within a park (i.e., hunting or logging). As well, innovative park governance arrangements with Aboriginal communities have been developed which contribute to maintaining and strengthening the social fabric of communities in and around parks.

Although the protection of biodiversity in national parks produces secondary social and economic benefits for communities and people around national parks, these are not the primary focus of this activity. In contrast, Parks Canada's work in protecting and preserving significant examples of Canada's history and culture is directly related to the social and cultural side of sustainable development. The importance of the cultural dimension of sustainable development is aptly summed up by Gro Brundtland, former chair of the World Commission on the Environment and Development.

If we are to succeed, we must be aware of the historical and social context of our lives, and build our futures on this understanding. Culture is the framework in which human beings develop, and our cultural heritage contributes to our comprehension of context, continuity and identity. This is why we have a particular responsibility for preserving our cultural monuments.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1994
In "Four Norwegian Cultural Treasures" a pamphlet on Norwegian cultural treasures published by Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO.

Parks Canada's work in this area is guided by the *National Historic Sites of Canada System Plan*. This Plan sets out a thematic framework, reports on progress to date and notes less-well represented aspects of Canada's history. Most importantly, it sets out three strategic priorities for commemoration: the history of Aboriginal people, ethno-cultural communities and women's history. Over the next three years, Parks Canada will work to increase the number of designations, particularly in unrepresented areas as well as directly assisting in the establishment and protection of new national historic sites.

Objective 1.2 Designation and Commemoration of New National Historic Sites, Persons and Events of National Historic Significance

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Consult and provide research support to identify and designate national historic sites • Assist in the establishment and protection of specific national historical sites (subject to obtaining new funding)	• Designate, over five years, 135 new sites, persons and events, 55 of which will commemorate Aboriginal, women's and ethno-cultural communities' history • Develop 10 new cost-sharing agreements over the next three years

Goal 2 Protect Ecological and Commemorative Integrity

Parks Canada's first responsibility is to manage its heritage resources for present and future generations. The challenge in achieving this responsibility is immense.

Although the concept of ecological integrity was developed first in reference to national parks, Parks Canada's efforts to manage ecological integrity are not restricted to national parks. Significant ecological values exist in areas managed for cultural resources. Parks Canada is making efforts to maintain these ecological values. However in the context of this sustainable development strategy, the focus is on the ecological integrity of national parks. In the case of ecological integrity, the challenges facing Parks Canada were outlined clearly in the recent *Report of the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks*.

In responding to this report, Parks Canada has focused on four key themes. These include renewing Parks Canada's internal focus on ecological integrity in national parks, improving planning and reporting related to ecological integrity, implementing changes to legislation and policy to ensure protection of ecological integrity and increasing emphasis on building partnerships with stakeholders in order to put an ecosystem management approach into practice. A special focus of partnering will be on expanding and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal peoples to improve protection of national parks. As a key government organization involved in protecting endangered species, Parks Canada will also prepare and implement new recovery plans for species at risk.

Objective 2.1 Improving Ecological Integrity

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Implement the National Action Plan in response to the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks	• Report yearly on the status of implementation
• Prepare and implement recovery plans for species at risk on Parks Canada administered lands in cooperation with other agencies	• To be leading the implementation of the recovery plans for eight species by March 2004

Our challenges regarding protection of cultural resources and ensuring commemorative integrity of national historic sites are also significant. Cultural resources such as archaeological sites, artifacts, and historic buildings exist in national parks as well as national historic sites. Parks Canada seeks to protect cultural values extended to all properties in its care. There is need to improve both the planning and reporting for commemorative integrity of national historic sites.

The foundation document for a national historic site management plan is a Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) which identifies what is important about a site and what conditions must be met for the values and resources not to be impaired and for the effective communication of the sites messages of national significance. Parks Canada is moving toward developing CISs for all of its sites over the next three years which will provide for the first time ever a consistent base for the protection and presentation of national historic sites and their associated resources.

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Territorial North

Parks Canada already has a significant presence in the North managing 10 national parks or national parks reserves, one national landmark and five national historic sites. There are offices throughout the North including four in communities in the Yukon, six in the Northwest Territories, and four in Nunavut. Parks Canada directly employs over 240 northerners, more than 20 percent of whom are Aboriginal people. With plans to complete the national park system and to enhance the national historic site system, this will only increase Parks Canada's involvement in Canada's north.

The draft Federal Strategy for the North identifies themes for horizontal planning and action to address northerners' sustainable development concerns. Parks Canada contributes, in a significant way to **four** of these themes.

Parks Canada supports **enhancing human health and natural northern environments** through establishment and stewardship of national parks and national park reserves. These protected ecological areas provide refuges for native biodiversity. Our increasing corporate focus on the maintenance of ecological integrity in national parks will contribute to any response to climate change and other environmental issues. Parks Canada wants to add new national parks and national park reserves to complete the national park system. Our stewardship of cultural heritage focuses firmly on commemorative integrity. We also seek to improve the commemoration of significant Aboriginal heritage in the North. Cross sectoral planning and action can enhance progress in these efforts.

Through park establishment activities, Parks Canada supports **development of new governance systems** in the North, another Northern Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) theme. Most of the northern national parks have cooperative management boards with representation from the Aboriginal community and the federal government to advise the Minister on park management. Traditional harvesting rights within national parks are recognized in land claim settlements. In this context Parks Canada also promotes **sustainable use of northern natural resources,** another of the NSDS themes, through use of traditional knowledge as an aid in park management, in planning and management of harvesting activity and by conducting environmental assessments of Parks Canada projects.

Finally, Parks Canada's physical presence, through direct employment and the effects of the tourism industry helps **build and sustain communities** in numerous northern communities. Our efforts to operate these facilities with maximum concern for sustainable operations can provide good examples and opportunities for cross sectoral planning and action.

Since 1998, national historic sites have had a legislative requirement to table management plans in Parliament which set out a long-term vision for the site and shorter-term management actions. Parks Canada will be moving forward to complete management plans for all the sites it administers by December 2003. Finally, the number of sites for which the actual commemorative integrity has been assessed will be increased.

Goal 2 Protect Ecological and Commemorative Integrity

Parks Canada's first responsibility is to manage its heritage resources for present and future generations. The challenge in achieving this responsibility is immense.

Although the concept of ecological integrity was developed first in reference to national parks, Parks Canada's efforts to manage ecological integrity are not restricted to national parks. Significant ecological values exist in areas managed for cultural resources. Parks Canada is making efforts to maintain these ecological values. However in the context of this sustainable development strategy, the focus is on the ecological integrity of national parks. In the case of ecological integrity, the challenges facing Parks Canada were outlined clearly in the recent *Report of the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks.*

In responding to this report, Parks Canada has focused on four key themes. These include renewing Parks Canada's internal focus on ecological integrity in national parks, improving planning and reporting related to ecological integrity, implementing changes to legislation and policy to ensure protection of ecological integrity and increasing emphasis on building partnerships with stakeholders in order to put an ecosystem management approach into practice. A special focus of partnering will be on expanding and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal peoples to improve protection of national parks. As a key government organization involved in protecting endangered species, Parks Canada will also prepare and implement new recovery plans for species at risk.

Objective 2.1 Improving Ecological Integrity

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Implement the National Action Plan in response to the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks	• Report yearly on the status of implementation
• Prepare and implement recovery plans for species at risk on Parks Canada administered lands in cooperation with other agencies	• To be leading the implementation of the recovery plans for eight species by March 2004

Our challenges regarding protection of cultural resources and ensuring commemorative integrity of national historic sites are also significant. Cultural resources such as archaeological sites, artifacts, and historic buildings exist in national parks as well as national historic sites. Parks Canada seeks to protect cultural values extended to all properties in its care. There is need to improve both the planning and reporting for commemorative integrity of national historic sites.

The foundation document for a national historic site management plan is a Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) which identifies what is important about a site and what conditions must be met for the values and resources not to be impaired and for the effective communication of the sites messages of national significance. Parks Canada is moving toward developing CISs for all of its sites over the next three years which will provide for the first time ever a consistent base for the protection and presentation of national historic sites and their associated resources.

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Territorial North

Parks Canada already has a significant presence in the North managing 10 national parks or national parks reserves, one national landmark and five national historic sites. There are offices throughout the North including four in communities in the Yukon, six in the Northwest Territories, and four in Nunavut. Parks Canada directly employs over 240 northerners, more than 20 percent of whom are Aboriginal people. With plans to complete the national park system and to enhance the national historic site system, this will only increase Parks Canada's involvement in Canada's north.

The draft Federal Strategy for the North identifies themes for horizontal planning and action to address northerners' sustainable development concerns. Parks Canada contributes, in a significant way to four of these themes.

Parks Canada supports **enhancing human health and natural northern environments** through establishment and stewardship of national parks and national park reserves. These protected ecological areas provide refuges for native biodiversity. Our increasing corporate focus on the maintenance of ecological integrity in national parks will contribute to any response to climate change and other environmental issues. Parks Canada wants to add new national parks and national park reserves to complete the national park system. Our stewardship of cultural heritage focuses firmly on commemorative integrity. We also seek to improve the commemoration of significant Aboriginal heritage in the North. Cross sectoral planning and action can enhance progress in these efforts.

Through park establishment activities, Parks Canada supports **development of new governance systems** in the North, another Northern Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) theme. Most of the northern national parks have cooperative management boards with representation from the Aboriginal community and the federal government to advise the Minister on park management. Traditional harvesting rights within national parks are recognized in land claim settlements. In this context Parks Canada also promotes **sustainable use of northern natural resources**, another of the NSDS themes, through use of traditional knowledge as an aid in park management, in planning and management of harvesting activity and by conducting environmental assessments of Parks Canada projects.

Finally, Parks Canada's physical presence, through direct employment and the effects of the tourism industry helps **build and sustain communities** in numerous northern communities. Our efforts to operate these facilities with maximum concern for sustainable operations can provide good examples and opportunities for cross sectoral planning and action.

Since 1998, national historic sites have had a legislative requirement to table management plans in Parliament which set out a long-term vision for the site and shorter-term management actions. Parks Canada will be moving forward to complete management plans for all the sites it administers by December 2003. Finally, the number of sites for which the actual commemorative integrity has been assessed will be increased.

Objective 2.2 Ensure Commemorative Integrity of National Historic Sites	
ACTIVITIES	**TARGETS**
• Complete management plans for national historic sites administered by Parks Canada	• Complete management plans for 145 national historic sites by December 2003
• Assess the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada	• Assess 15 new sites by March 2002 and 15 more by March 2004

Goal 3 Ensure that Commemorative and Ecological Integrity Values Are Understood and Supported by Parks Canada's Stakeholders and the Public

Interpretation and outreach are critical tools for conveying the significance of protected areas and for raising public awareness of the threats facing national parks and national historic sites. The challenge is to provide meaningful, captivating and enjoyable interpretation and outreach education experiences which include messages about appropriate and sustainable use and which motivate people to advocate for ecosystem and heritage resource protection.

Parks Canada has begun to develop consistent system wide messaging around the themes of protection and ecological integrity and assurance of commemorative integrity. More work needs to be done to implement the program of heritage presentation renewal including delivering messages in urban areas through community outreach programming and facilities, reaching out to Canada's youth, and finding better ways to measure the impacts of our messaging on the public and specific target audiences.

Objective 3.1 Improve Awareness, Understanding and Support of the Values of National Parks and National Historic Sites	
ACTIVITY	**TARGET**
• Strengthen ecological integrity and commemorative integrity messages and delivery	• Develop target by January 2002

Parks Canada also needs to influence the expectations of both visitors and its partners in the tourism industry, about appropriate activities and experiences in national parks, national marine conservation areas, and national historic sites. The goal is to attract the right number of visitors, to the right places at the right times in order to minimize the impact of these visitors on the resources that are entrusted to Parks Canada's stewardship.

Objective 3.2 Visitor Expectations Are Managed to Minimize Impact on Heritage Resources	
ACTIVITY	**TARGET**
• Work with the tourism industry to influence messaging and practices so that they are consistent with commemorative and ecological integrity values	• Develop evaluation framework by March 2002 and conduct evaluation by March 2003

Goal 4 Improve Environmental Stewardship in Managing Our Operations

Parks Canada is a leader in the stewardship of natural and cultural resources. Stakeholders and the public recognize this and expect that Parks Canada's own operations and facilities will be managed in ways that do not compromise stewardship values. Parks Canada therefore has a special responsibility in how it manages park and site facilities, park communities and commercial operations.

Parks Canada Operations

Parks Canada is one of the 10 major custodial departments in the federal government occupying approximately 512 000 square metres of building space across the country. Parks Canada also manages approximately $7 billion in replacement value of assets. A national asset review in 1998, updated in 1999, found that the majority of assets have now passed their expected life cycle and two-thirds are now in fair or poor condition. The deteriorating quality of the asset base limits the capacity to meet current environmental standards.

Concern about this situation was expressed in the *Report of the Panel on Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks*, as the state of these facilities negatively impacts on ecological conditions in the parks. Investment needs for long-term sustainability are in the order of $95 million per year above current levels. Parks Canada is working to obtain new funding and intends to incorporate innovative environmental design and other measures to minimize the ecological footprint of facilities as they are re-capitalized. Over the next three years, Parks Canada will emphasize the greening of park operations and infrastructure.

In 1997 Parks Canada developed a *National Environmental Management Framework* that identified 14 operational environmental aspects that together capture the scope of environmental interactions of Parks Canada's operations. These aspects fall into three natural groupings, listed here in order of priority;

- *legal obligations* (polyclorinated biphenyls (PCB), petroleum storage tanks, halocarbon use and management);
- *air emissions related to Canada's response to the Kyoto Agreement on greenhouse gases* (fleet management, other transportation and equipment, emissions, and energy conservation);

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Sustainable Development in Government Operations

In an effort to set common directions for sustainable development in government operations, departments and agencies collaborated in the preparation of a document: *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach* in June 2000. Building upon the major on-going commitments of *A Guide for Green Government*, this document outlines best practices in seven areas of operations. It proposes performance measures and sample sets of targets. Emulation of sample targets allows reporting across departments.

Parks Canada's revised *National Environmental Management Framework* includes specific objectives and targets based, as much as possible, upon the models presented in the *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach.*

Objective 2.2 Ensure Commemorative Integrity of National Historic Sites

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Complete management plans for national historic sites administered by Parks Canada	• Complete management plans for 145 national historic sites by December 2003
• Assess the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada	• Assess 15 new sites by March 2002 and 15 more by March 2004

Goal 3 Ensure that Commemorative and Ecological Integrity Values Are Understood and Supported by Parks Canada's Stakeholders and the Public

Interpretation and outreach are critical tools for conveying the significance of protected areas and for raising public awareness of the threats facing national parks and national historic sites. The challenge is to provide meaningful, captivating and enjoyable interpretation and outreach education experiences which include messages about appropriate and sustainable use and which motivate people to advocate for ecosystem and heritage resource protection.

Parks Canada has begun to develop consistent system wide messaging around the themes of protection and ecological integrity and assurance of commemorative integrity. More work needs to be done to implement the program of heritage presentation renewal including delivering messages in urban areas through community outreach programming and facilities, reaching out to Canada's youth, and finding better ways to measure the impacts of our messaging on the public and specific target audiences.

Objective 3.1 Improve Awareness, Understanding and Support of the Values of National Parks and National Historic Sites

ACTIVITY	TARGET
• Strengthen ecological integrity and commemorative integrity messages and delivery	• Develop target by January 2002

Parks Canada also needs to influence the expectations of both visitors and its partners in the tourism industry, about appropriate activities and experiences in national parks, national marine conservation areas, and national historic sites. The goal is to attract the right number of visitors, to the right places at the right times in order to minimize the impact of these visitors on the resources that are entrusted to Parks Canada's stewardship.

Objective 3.2 Visitor Expectations Are Managed to Minimize Impact on Heritage Resources

ACTIVITY	TARGET
• Work with the tourism industry to influence messaging and practices so that they are consistent with commemorative and ecological integrity values	• Develop evaluation framework by March 2002 and conduct evaluation by March 2003

Goal 4 Improve Environmental Stewardship in Managing Our Operations

Parks Canada is a leader in the stewardship of natural and cultural resources. Stakeholders and the public recognize this and expect that Parks Canada's own operations and facilities will be managed in ways that do not compromise stewardship values. Parks Canada therefore has a special responsibility in how it manages park and site facilities, park communities and commercial operations.

Parks Canada Operations

Parks Canada is one of the 10 major custodial departments in the federal government occupying approximately 512 000 square metres of building space across the country. Parks Canada also manages approximately $7 billion in replacement value of assets. A national asset review in 1998, updated in 1999, found that the majority of assets have now passed their expected life cycle and two-thirds are now in fair or poor condition. The deteriorating quality of the asset base limits the capacity to meet current environmental standards.

Concern about this situation was expressed in the *Report of the Panel on Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks*, as the state of these facilities negatively impacts on ecological conditions in the parks. Investment needs for long-term sustainability are in the order of $95 million per year above current levels. Parks Canada is working to obtain new funding and intends to incorporate innovative environmental design and other measures to minimize the ecological footprint of facilities as they are re-capitalized. Over the next three years, Parks Canada will emphasize the greening of park operations and infrastructure.

In 1997 Parks Canada developed a *National Environmental Management Framework* that identified 14 operational environmental aspects that together capture the scope of environmental interactions of Parks Canada's operations. These aspects fall into three natural groupings, listed here in order of priority:

- *legal obligations* (polyclorinated biphenyls (PCB), petroleum storage tanks, halocarbon use and management);
- *air emissions related to Canada's response to the Kyoto Agreement on greenhouse gases* (fleet management, other transportation and equipment, emissions, and energy conservation);

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Sustainable Development in Government Operations

In an effort to set common directions for sustainable development in government operations, departments and agencies collaborated in the preparation of a document: *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach* in June 2000. Building upon the major on-going commitments of *A Guide for Green Government*, this document outlines best practices in seven areas of operations. It proposes performance measures and sample sets of targets. Emulation of sample targets allows reporting across departments.

Parks Canada's revised *National Environmental Management Framework* includes specific objectives and targets based, as much as possible, upon the models presented in the *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach.*

- *various guidelines and policies that Parks Canada has subscribed to* (hazardous material management, waste water management, pesticide use, contaminated sites, solid waste management, water conservation, and green procurement).

Parks Canada has operational objectives and targets for all of these aspects and has worked, and will continue to work, on them all over the next three years. However, we have chosen to focus on the two highest priority groupings of aspects in this strategy, i.e., regulated aspects, and those which relate to the federal government's response to the Kyoto Agreement on greenhouse gases.

Objective 4.1 Improve Environmental Management Throughout Parks Canada Operations

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Ensure compliance with regulations in management of PCBs, petroleum storage tanks and halocarbons	• Complete inventories and establish procedures to ensure full compliance with regulations by September 2001
• Work with our vehicle fleet, other equipment, and buildings associated with Parks Canada operations to reduce green house gas emissions and energy consumption	• Establish targets in March 2001 after negotiation among affected federal departments

National Park Communities

Parks Canada manages six national park communities (i.e., Field in Yoho NP; Jasper in Jasper NP; Lake Louise in Banff NP; Wasagaming in Riding Mountain NP; Waskesiu in Prince Albert NP; and Waterton Lakes in Waterton Lakes NP). As a result of concerns expressed by the public over the amount of commercial development in the Town of Banff, Parks Canada made a commitment to develop community plans for each of these park communities.[4]

Each community plan is guided by the principles of no net negative environmental impacts, appropriate use, responsible growth management and leadership in environmental stewardship and heritage conservation. To date five community plans have been approved and the plan for Jasper is expected to be completed within the next two years. With incorporation of the concept of no net negative environmental impact each community plan essentially becomes a community level sustainable development strategy. Work has begun on developing the needed indicators and targets related to environmental impacts for each community. Parks Canada will work with other federal departments to achieve this vision through existing federal programs.

Objective 4.2 National Park Communities Sustainable Small Communities

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Work with community groups to develop community plans for the towns where current approved plans do not exist	• Complete the Lake Louise Community Plan by September 2001, and the Jasper Community Plan by March 2002
• Work with community groups to create no net negative environmental impact framework documents and reporting tools for each townsite	• Develop frameworks for six communities including reporting tools for achieving no net negative environmental effects by March 2003

[4] The Banff Townsite has been self-governed since 1990. A community plan is required under provincial legislation. The Banff Community Plan must also observe the principle of no net negative environmental impact.

- *various guidelines and policies that Parks Canada has subscribed to* (hazardous material management, waste water management, pesticide use, contaminated sites, solid waste management, water conservation, and green procurement).

Parks Canada has operational objectives and targets for all of these aspects and has worked, and will continue to work, on them all over the next three years. However, we have chosen to focus on the two highest priority groupings of aspects in this strategy, i.e., regulated aspects, and those which relate to the federal government's response to the Kyoto Agreement on greenhouse gases.

Objective 4.1 Improve Environmental Management Throughout Parks Canada Operations

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Ensure compliance with regulations in management of PCBs, petroleum storage tanks and halocarbons	• Complete inventories and establish procedures to ensure full compliance with regulations by September 2001
• Work with our vehicle fleet, other equipment, and buildings associated with Parks Canada operations to reduce green house gas emissions and energy consumption	• Establish targets in March 2001 after negotiation among affected federal departments

National Park Communities

Parks Canada manages six national park communities (i.e., Field in Yoho NP; Jasper in Jasper NP; Lake Louise in Banff NP; Wasagaming in Riding Mountain NP; Waskesiu in Prince Albert NP; and Waterton Lakes in Waterton Lakes NP). As a result of concerns expressed by the public over the amount of commercial development in the Town of Banff, Parks Canada made a commitment to develop community plans for each of these park communities.[4]

Each community plan is guided by the principles of no net negative environmental impacts, appropriate use, responsible growth management and leadership in environmental stewardship and heritage conservation. To date five community plans have been approved and the plan for Jasper is expected to be completed within the next two years. With incorporation of the concept of no net negative environmental impact each community plan essentially becomes a community level sustainable development strategy. Work has begun on developing the needed indicators and targets related to environmental impacts for each community. Parks Canada will work with other federal departments to achieve this vision through existing federal programs.

Objective 4.2 National Park Communities Sustainable Small Communities

ACTIVITIES	TARGETS
• Work with community groups to develop community plans for the towns where current approved plans do not exist	• Complete the Lake Louise Community Plan by September 2001, and the Jasper Community Plan by March 2002
• Work with community groups to create no net negative environmental impact framework documents and reporting tools for each townsite	• Develop frameworks for six communities including reporting tools for achieving no net negative environmental effects by March 2003

[4] The Banff Townsite has been self-governed since 1990. A community plan is required under provincial legislation. The Banff Community Plan must also observe the principle of no net negative environmental impact.

Horizontal Planning and Action Theme
Sustainable Communities

The smallest national park communities, Waskesiu, Wasagaming and Waterton, are seasonal visitor communities with permanent populations of less than 100. They have well developed physical infrastructure including roads, water and waste water facilities, waste collection, power supply but little social infrastructure such as schools or hospitals. Winter activity in these communities is significantly less than in summer. At the other end of the spectrum, Banff and Jasper possess more extensive physical and social infrastructure, larger permanent populations, and serve as year round destinations for visitors. Field and Lake Louise represent communities between these extremes.

As a federal agency responsible for national parks townsites, Parks Canada is in a unique position within the government, to influence development in these communities toward an "eco-community" ideal. Parks Canada and residents of national parks communities such as Banff are working to bring life to the concept of *no net negative environmental impact* (NNNEI) as part of Parks Canada's effort to maintain the ecological integrity of national parks.

No Net Negative Environmental Impact means everyone working together to ensure that wildlife, plants, air, water, soil and the processes that connect them will be better off, or no worse tomorrow than they are today. The cumulative effect on the ecological well-being of their host parks, of development decisions in these communities, from now on, will be positive, not negative. The key elements of NNNEI are: shared responsibility; the precautionary principle; adequate baseline knowledge; targets, indicators, monitoring and a process of evaluation. The NNNEI approach is being developed first in the Town of Banff but the intent is to extend it to all of the national park communities and beyond.

"The Banff solution... is one that I think can serve as a template for environmental management in communities, not, just inside National Parks, but indeed for communities across Canada and around the world."

Sheila Copps,
Minister of Canadian Heritage,
Banff Crag and Canyon, July 12, 2000

Measuring Our Performance

Parks Canada will measure and report on its performance in implementing its Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) on an annual basis. Through the annual Departmental Performance Reports (DPR) and the Parks Canada Annual Report,[5] Parks Canada will report against the goals outlined in this SDS.

While annual reporting in the DPR and Annual Report will be at the level of goals, for internal management purposes a more detailed monitoring and reporting will be undertaken to follow up on specific actions proposed in this Strategy. This type of monitoring will enable Parks Canada management to check if it is on course, and to identify corrective actions if they are needed during the three year period of the Strategy. If adjustments to goals, objectives or targets become necessary, this will be done through Parks Canada's Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) and Corporate Plan.

---

[5] Treasury Board requires Parks Canada to produce its own DPR along with all departments and agencies. The Parks Canada Annual Report is required by Parks Canada Agency legislation.

ANNEX 1: PARKS CANADA IN PROFILE

MANDATE

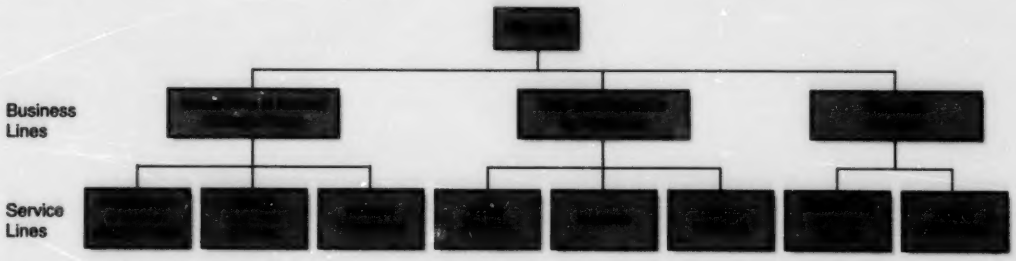
To protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

Parks Canada was established as an agency of the federal government through the *Parks Canada Agency Act* in December 1998. The Parks Canada Agency has been established as a departmental corporation under Schedule II of the *Financial Administration Act.* This means that Parks Canada is a separate legal entity which reports to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and is dedicated to delivering the programs set out within the Agency's legislation and policy authorities. The Minister remains responsible for the overall direction of the agency and is accountable to Parliament for all Parks Canada activities.

Agency Organization

Parks Canada's business lines and service lines are the basis of its Planning, Reporting and Accountability Structure (PRAS). At the highest level, three business lines represent groups of key activities and results to be achieved.

Flowing from the business lines are eight service lines that provide a more detailed breakdown of activities and results. The service lines are the building blocks of both corporate and unit planning and reporting.



ANNEX 1: PARKS CANADA IN PROFILE

MANDATE

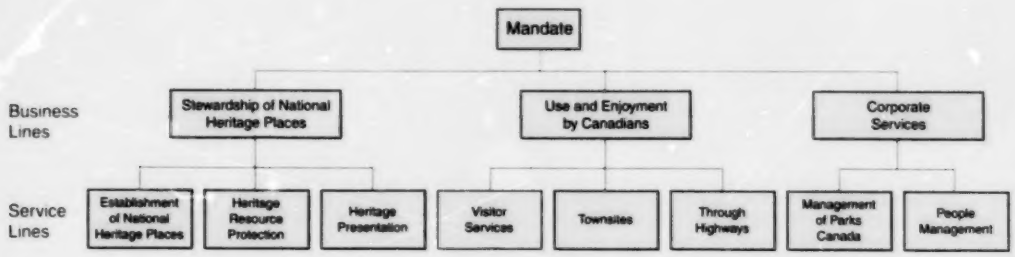
To protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

Parks Canada was established as an agency of the federal government through the *Parks Canada Agency Act* in December 1998. The Parks Canada Agency has been established as a departmental corporation under Schedule II of the *Financial Administration Act*. This means that Parks Canada is a separate legal entity which reports to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and is dedicated to delivering the programs set out within the Agency's legislation and policy authorities. The Minister remains responsible for the overall direction of the agency and is accountable to Parliament for all Parks Canada activities.

Agency Organization

Parks Canada's business lines and service lines are the basis of its Planning, Reporting and Accountability Structure (PRAS). At the highest level, three business lines represent groups of key activities and results to be achieved.

Flowing from the business lines are eight service lines that provide a more detailed breakdown of activities and results. The service lines are the building blocks of both corporate and unit planning and reporting.

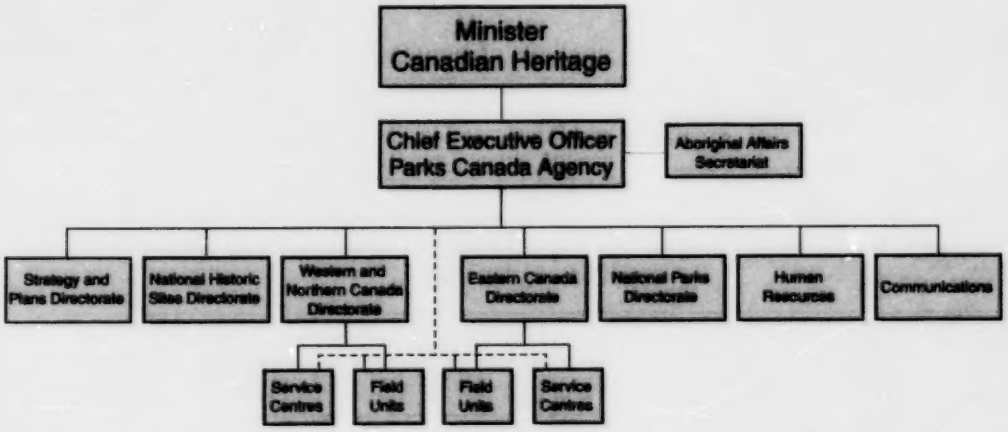


Stewardship of National Heritage Places encompasses establishment, protection and presentation of heritage places. Stewardship includes identifying and establishing national heritage places as well as managing and protecting the natural and cultural resources in Canada's heritage places. Stewardship also includes communicating key messages of national significance and providing educational opportunities. Parks Canada collaborates with national and international stakeholders in fostering and advocating heritage protection and presentation.

The Use and Enjoyment by Canadians business line refers to access to heritage places. It includes providing appropriate recreational opportunities, products and services as well as marketing and building mutually beneficial relations with clients and stakeholders. Use and enjoyment also includes engaging Canadians to participate and be involved as volunteers and active supporters. Parks Canada works to raise public awareness of ecological and commemorative benefits and values.

The Corporate Services business line deals with the overall management of Parks Canada. It includes developing and implementing procedures, systems, tools and innovative practices in financial and human resources. Parks Canada also prepares analyses and plans to support decision-making and prepares documents and submissions for central agencies and for Parliament.

Governance



ANNEX 2:
REVIEW OF THE 1997 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In preparation for the development of our new Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), Parks Canada conducted an internal review of its 1997 Sustainable Development Strategy. The review sought to document success against our commitments, identify areas of improvement, and highlight management and implementation issues.

The review showed that Parks Canada had been successful in meeting its goals and objectives related to the establishment of national parks and the enhancement of the system of national historic sites and that it was on track in its efforts to establish new national marine conservation areas and national parks by 2003-2004. Some progress was documented with regard to putting in place the basic elements required to protect and preserve Canada's natural cultural heritage, and increase scientific understanding of natural systems and human-environment relationships although weaknesses were identified in the capacity to monitor and report on many specific commitments. A number of actions were taken leading to a renewal of Parks Canada's heritage presentation programming including the development of national messaging with sustainable development themes. Efforts were also made to influence the travel industry's messaging regarding sustainable tourism and the kinds of experience they offer their customers at national parks.

Some progress was also reported with the development of townsite community plans, and a framework for identifying and monitoring environmental impacts of the communities. However, the full operational implementation of these plans had yet to happen. Similarly, while a framework for identifying and monitoring the environmental aspects of Parks Canada's operations had been developed, implementation of the framework at specific sites was far from complete, a fact noted by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in his May, 2000 report.

The review also identified a number of challenges with regard to the design and support for the Strategy including problems with the logical links between parts of the Strategy, and the need to better integrate the Strategy into the overall management regime of the Agency including providing clearer accountability for implementing, monitoring and reviewing the SDS as a whole and as well as specific aspects of the SDS. Problems were also identified with diffuse or ambiguous commitments which lacked measurable targets and a lack of internal management information systems for monitoring and reporting on specific activities, outputs, and outcomes. According to the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development,[6] many of these issues were common to most of the first round of sustainable development strategies in government.

---

[6] "Moving Up the Learning Curve. The Second Generation of Sustainable Development Strategies" Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, December 1999.

ANNEX 3: CONSULTATIONS

Parks Canada consults continuously and extensively on all aspects of its programs and operations. The results of these consultations form the basis of park and site management plans, field unit business plans, corporate strategic direction and plans. They have served directly or indirectly to shape our new Sustainable Development Strategy.

In 1998, 1999 and 2000 Parks Canada has consulted, as required by policy, on 49 management plans for national parks and national historic sites, national marine conservation areas, and six national park communities. These plans lay out the future development of each site including strategies for protecting the ecological integrity and ensuring the commemorative integrity of the site while balancing other economic and social interests in these national heritage places.

In addition, Parks Canada has been involved in a variety of specific consultation exercises which have direct bearing on the sustainable operation of national parks and national historic sites. These have included consultations related to the establishment of new parks and marine conservation areas, consultations on the future of commercial accommodations outside the townsites in the mountain park block, consultations for developing ski area guidelines in the mountain parks, consultation related to the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks and consultations related to the development of a new Agency Charter. The Ecological Integrity Panel alone was involved in meetings with more than 280 Parks Canada employees and over 300 individuals and representatives of interest groups as well as reviewing 60 written briefs.

Finally, there are on-going forums for consulting stakeholders and visitors including a variety of local national park and historic site management advisory groups, cooperative management boards, and other forms of local and regional input into Parks Canada's operations.

In summary, over the last two and half years, Parks Canada has been involved in literally hundreds of meetings involving more than a thousand individuals and stakeholder groups. It is these consultations that form the basis of Parks Canada's current strategic directions as reflected in the Corporate Plan and the new Sustainable Development Strategy.

ANNEX 4: ISSUE SCAN

In developing a revised Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), Parks Canada reviewed a variety of factors in the operating environment which are likely to have an impact on what and how we can pursue sustainable development commitments over the next three years.

Panel on Ecological Integrity in Canada's National Parks

One of the most significant influences on Parks Canada in the last three years was the release in March 2000 of *The Report of the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks.* The independent Panel was established in November, 1998, by the Minister of Canadian Heritage in response to commitments the Government made in *Our Future Together* (1997). The Panel's mandate was to study the state of ecological integrity in the national parks, from a science perspective, and to identify remedial strategies applicable to the entire national park system. Composed of independent scientific experts, the Panel spent 12 months visiting selected, representative national parks across the country, meeting with park staff and stakeholders, and studying the many issues facing the parks.

The Panel Report assessed the nature and scope of the concept of ecological integrity as applied by Parks Canada, and defined and evaluated the issues related to the maintenance of ecological integrity in Canada's national parks. The Panel concluded that national parks are under serious threat from stresses originating both inside and outside the parks, habitat loss and fragmentation, loss of large carnivores, air pollution, pesticides, exotic species and overuse. The Report of the Panel also assessed the approach, methods and programs developed by Parks Canada in terms of their effects on the maintenance of ecological integrity and where appropriate, made recommendations related to new, additional or alternative approaches and methods for ensuring long-term maintenance/restoration of ecological integrity.

The Report provides a comprehensive examination of the management of national parks, addressing, among other topics, Parks Canada's organizational culture, planning processes, science capacity, relations with Aboriginal peoples and stakeholders, interpretation and outreach programs and management of visitor use of the parks. It includes 127 specific recommendations. The Panel recognized that implementation of its recommendations would require additional funding beyond Parks Canada's current budget. One of the final chapters of the report is devoted to the need for committed long-term investment and includes estimates for the costs of implementing the key recommendations.

The Minister in releasing the Report stated that *"We will revitalize Canada's National Parks. That is our responsibility to future generations, and we will fulfill that responsibility. And I believe that the work that has been done by the Panel gives us the blueprint we need to begin today in returning our*

parks to the level of ecological integrity that we inherited from our ancestors." The Minister's *Action Plan in Response to the Report of the Panel on the Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks (the Action Plan)*, released simultaneously with the report, highlights four major themes:

- making ecological integrity central in legislation and policy;
- building partnerships;
- planning for ecological integrity; and
- renewing Parks Canada to better support the ecological integrity mandate.

Parks Canada is implementing the Minister's Action Plan by first taking immediate action on elements of the plan which can be achieved in the short term with existing resources. Second, Parks Canada is pursuing a dialogue with partners on actions which will require the participation of others. For example, the Minister's Action Plan contained general directions for future actions in areas such as adjacent land uses, relations with Aboriginal peoples and marketing and tourism associations. Implementing these directions will require the cooperation of a wide range of interested individuals and organizations. The Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada, will report publicly on Parks Canada's responses to the Panel Report and on the progress made at the Minister's Round Table to be held in 2001.

Changes in Canadian Society

According to Canada's most recent census, immigrants to Canada make up approximately 16 percent of Canada's total population. These people did not grow up learning about Canada's explorers and nation builders or its biodiversity. For many, the Canadian experience is largely an urban one unconnected to the natural environment which is critical to future sustainable development. This is also true for a large proportion of Canada's youth. The changing Canadian demographics challenge Parks Canada to develop programs that will reach more Canadians and foster an appreciation and understanding of the essence of Canada's heritage places. Increasingly, Canada's heritage places can become important venues for new Canadians, as well as their friends and relatives from abroad, to learn about Canada's natural and human history.

Environmental Trends

The world's population has increased by almost five times since the early 1900s. During the same period, the global economy has grown by 20 times, the consumption of fossil fuels by 30 times and industrial production by 50 times. Human activities are altering the pace of ecological change and drastically transforming the world's ecosystems.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation, under the North American Free Trade Agreement, has expressed concerns about the current rate of degradation of North America's air quality, freshwater ecosystems and reserves, wetlands, forested land and wildlife habitats. Along the North American coasts, human induced stresses such as terrain modification and renewable and non-renewable resource harvesting affect marine ecosystems. These effects have culminated in habitat degradation as well as the loss of or decline in some fish stocks. All of these factors present difficulties for the maintenance of ecological integrity in national parks and national marine conservation areas.

Canada is recognized as a country with abundant natural resources. However, changes in the quality of Canada's ecosystems have become more obvious in the last decade. Reductions in old growth forests and the fragmentation of natural landscapes have negatively affected species that require large and continuous habitat. Stocks of some commercial fish species have declined dramatically. As well, development pressures in the South and resource extraction opportunities in the North have created an urgency to set aside land for conservation.

At the same time, there are encouraging developments in ecosystem management, such as the steps being taken by governments and partners throughout North America to protect more and larger representative marine and terrestrial areas, to encourage public private partnerships that harmonize land-use practices and to promote sustainable development.

Tourism Industry Trends

National parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas are significant components of Canada's network of heritage attractions of interest to both Canadian and international travellers. Since the likelihood of travel increases with education and aging baby boomers are better educated than previous generations, Canada could experience an increase in domestic leisure travel during the next few years.

Canada's heritage places contribute significantly to the Government's efforts to make this country a preferred tourism destination. People interested in heritage tourism look for adventure, learning and authenticity in a natural or cultural environment, and they understand the importance of protecting heritage places. These people tend to travel farther, stay longer and spend more than other leisure travellers. However, as travellers seek to avoid peak season crowds, heritage tourism may increase demand for shoulder season and off season use in remote areas, placing additional pressure on wildlife during critical mating and birthing seasons. In some national parks, tourism pressures will place challenges on Parks Canada to maintain ecological integrity. Parks Canada will need to find innovative ways to manage market demand to preserve ecological integrity and ensure commemorative integrity within the system of protected heritage places. Carefully planned promotion will be needed to attract visitors in numbers consistent with local carrying capacities.

Within the next five years, Aboriginal tourism could emerge as an important market. Tourism trends indicate that more knowledgeable tourists are looking for authentic and intellectually stimulating activities. Aboriginal tourism products could meet this need. There are many opportunities for Parks Canada to work with Aboriginal communities to realize these opportunities.

Working with Aboriginal Communities

Parks Canada has increasingly found common ground with Aboriginal people in establishing and managing heritage places. When the establishment of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas involves land claim issues, Parks Canada can contribute to the resolution of comprehensive claims settlements. Through the National Historic Sites Cost-Sharing Program, Parks Canada works with Aboriginal communities to protect and present their heritage. In addition, approximately one third of Canada's 39 national parks have cooperative management boards.

Aboriginal communities are important service providers to visitors. Through jointly developed tourism strategies, there are many opportunities for Parks Canada and Aboriginal people to promote authentic visitor experiences. These cooperative activities can help to diversify and develop local economies.

Parks Canada created the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat in 1999 as part of Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan, commonly known as *Gathering Strength*. Its mandate is to provide national leadership and support within the Agency in matters relevant to Canada's Aboriginal people. The Secretariat will encourage consultation with Aboriginal people on Parks Canada's interpretation and public education programs to celebrate Aboriginal heritage at national parks, national marine conservation areas, and national historic sites across the country; identify economic opportunities associated with national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas for the benefit of Aboriginal communities and Parks Canada, and stimulate dialogue with Aboriginal people at the national and local levels in order to build trust and resolve issues.

Financial Pressures

During 1999-2000, Parks Canada continued to face significant financial pressures in the delivery of its programs. This was recognized in the *Report of the Panel on Ecological Integrity in Canada's National Parks* which recommended $328 million in additional funding for Parks Canada in order to implement its recommendations for ensuring the protection of ecological integrity in national parks. Long-term funding is also necessary to complete the national parks system, expand the system of national marine conservation areas and enhance the system of national historic sites. In addition, Parks Canada manages a variety of cultural, heritage presentation and contemporary assets worth more than $7 billion in replacement value. A national asset review in 1998, updated in 1999, found that the majority of assets have now passed their expected life cycle and two-thirds are now in fair or poor condition. Based on this review, it is estimated that an additional investment of $475 million will be required to maintain and improve Parks Canada's infrastructure. Parks Canada continues to pursue funding strategies to address all of these pressures.